

Esne, an Important document of the Imperial age, is obviously based on the fixed Alexandrian year ; for it assigns the mark for New Year's Day to the day which corresponds to the twenty-ninth of August, which was the first day of the Alexandrian year, and its references to the rising of the Nile, the position of the sun, and the operations of agriculture are all in harmony with this supposition.¹ Thus we may take it as fairly certain that from 30 B.C. onwards the Egyptian festivals were stationary in the solar year.

The Herodotus tells us that the grave of Osiris was at Sais in sufferings Lower Egypt, and that there was a lake there upon which the of Osiris

displayed sufferings of the god were displayed as a mystery by night/mster This commemoration of the divine passion was held once a at Sais. year: the people mourned and beat their breasts at it to testify their sorrow for the death of the god ; and an image of a cow, made of gilt wood with a golden sun between its horns, was carried out of the chamber in which it stood the rest of the year.³ The cow no doubt represented Isis herself, for cows were sacred to her, and she was regularly depicted with the horns of a cow on her head,⁴ or even as a woman with the head of a cow.⁵ It is probable that the carrying out of her cow-shaped image symbolized the goddess searching for the dead body of Osiris ; for this was the native Egyptian interpretation of a similar ceremony observed in Plutarch's time about the winter solstice, when the gilt cow was carried seven times round the temple.⁶ A great feature of the festival was the

festival was held after the spring the name of the
 sacred animal agrees
 equinox (*op. cit.* 65), which implies with that of the
 deity.³⁵ *Host* was the
 the use of a fixed solar year. See usual Egyptian
 form of the name
 G. Parthey in his edition of Plutarch's which the Greeks
 and Romans repre-
Isis et Osiris (Berlin, 1850), pp. 165- sented as Isis.
 See R. V. Lanson, 169. *Dizionario di MUologia*
Egizia pp.
¹ H. Brugsch, *Die Agyptologie* p. 813 sqq.
 355-⁵ In. this form she is
 represented on
 - Herodotus, ii. 170. a relief at Philae pouring a
 libation in
³ Herodotus, ii. 129-132. honour of the soul of
 Osiris. See
⁴ Herodotus, ii. 41, with Prof. A. E. A. Wallis
 Budge, *Osiris and the*,
 Wiedemann's note (*Herodots zweites Egyptian*
Resurrection i. 8. She is
Buck, pp. 187 sqq.); Diodorus similarly portrayed
 in a bronze statu-
 Siculus, i. II. 4; Aelian, *De natura* ette, which is
 now in the Louvre.
anitnatum, x. 27; Plutarch, *Isis et* See G. Perrot et Ch.
 Chipiez, *Histoire*,
Osiris, 19 and 39. According to *de l'Art dans l'*
Antiquity i. (Paris,
 Prof. Wiedemann "the Egyptian 1882) p. 60, fig. 40.
 name of the cow of Isis was *hes-t*, and ⁶ Plutarch, *Isis*
et Osiris, 52. The